

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A gypsum board precoated during manufacture with a coating, the gypsum board comprising:

a gypsum core having a first side and a second side and a facing sheet disposed on the first side; and

the coating disposed on an entirety of the facing sheet,

wherein at least a portion of the coating penetrates through at least a portion of the facing sheet and into the gypsum core.

2. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein the coating penetrates into the gypsum core to a substantially uniform depth across an area of the gypsum board.

3. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein a thickness of the coating is up to 30 mils.

4. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 3, wherein the thickness of the coating is preferably 3-20 mils.

5. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein the coating is a joint compound.

6. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein the coating comprises:

25-75 wt.% water;

30-70 wt.% calcium carbonate;

0-30 wt.% filler;

2-10 wt.% latex emulsion; and

0-10 wt.% additives.

7. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 6, wherein the filler comprises one or more of mica, talc, clay, and limestone.

8. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 6, wherein the composition further comprises a pigment in an amount sufficient to provide a desired tint to the coating.

9. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein the coating comprises:

10-60 vol.% water;

50-90 vol.% calcined gypsum;

0.1-10 vol.% binder;

0-50 vol.% limestone;

0-10 vol.% clay;

0-30 vol.% other fillers; and

0-10 vol% additives.

10. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 9, wherein the composition further comprises a pigment in an amount sufficient to provide a desired tint to the coating.

11. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 9, wherein the facing sheet is made from unbleached grey paper and the coating is comprised primarily of calcium carbonate or gypsum.

12. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 9, wherein the facing sheet of the completed board has a level 5 finish, as defined herein.

13. (Currently Amended) A gypsum board precoated during manufacture with a coating, the gypsum board comprising:

a gypsum core having a first side and a second side and a facing sheet disposed on the first side; and

the coating disposed on an entirety of the facing sheet such that the facing sheet has a level 5 finish after manufacture and prior to applying the gypsum board in an intended application.

14. (Original) The gypsum board of claim 13, wherein the coating is primarily calcium carbonate or gypsum.

15. (Currently Amended) A gypsum board precoated during manufacture with a coating, the gypsum board comprising:

a gypsum core having a first side and a second side and a facing sheet disposed on the first side; and

the coating disposed on an entirety of the facing sheet such that the facing sheet has a level 4 finish after manufacture and prior to applying the gypsum board in an intended application.

16. (Currently Amended) A kit comprising a quantity of joint compound and a plurality of gypsum boards precoated during manufacture with a coating applied thereon, each of the gypsum boards comprising:

a gypsum core having a first side and a second side and a facing sheet disposed on the first side; and

the coating disposed on an entirety of the facing sheet; and

the coating is a diluted form of the joint compound.

17. (Original) The kit of claim 16, wherein the coating is primarily calcium carbonate or gypsum.

18. (Original) The kit of claim 16, wherein the coating is such that the facing sheet has a level 5 finish after manufacture and prior to applying the gypsum board in an intended application.

19. (Original) The kit of claim 18, wherein the coating is primarily calcium carbonate or gypsum.

20 - 31. (Cancelled)

32. (New) The gypsum board of claim 1, wherein the precoating is applied before the gypsum board is passed through a drying oven.

33. (New) The gypsum board of claim 13, wherein the precoating is applied before the gypsum board is passed through a drying oven.

34. (New) The gypsum board of claim 15, wherein the precoating is applied before the gypsum board is passed through a drying oven.

35. (New) The kit according to claim 16, wherein the precoating is applied before the plurality of gypsum boards have passed through a drying oven.

36. (New) The gypsum board of claim 12, wherein the precoating is applied after the gypsum board has passed through a drying oven.

37. (New) The gypsum board of claim 13, wherein the precoating is applied after the gypsum board has passed through a drying oven.

38. (New) The gypsum board of claim 15, wherein the precoating is applied after the gypsum board has passed through a drying oven.

39. (New) The kit according to claim 16, wherein the precoating is applied after the plurality of gypsum boards have passed through a drying oven.